**Gattaca: Film as Text**

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1. What is film noir and how does Gattaca use film noir techniques?

Film noir is a French term that means ‘black film’. Gattaca uses film noir techniques all the way throughout the film. For example, during the opening credits the feel of the scene seems kind of sad and the music makes it sound like it’s the end of something instead of the beginning. Also the detective work that goes on behind the murder of the mission director is a technique or style or a film noir.

1. What are the main settings in Gattaca? Describe these settings and how they are used as a contrast to each other?

The main settings in Gattaca are at Gattaca, Eugene and Vincent’s apartment and the beach. They all contrast with each other because they all have a different atmosphere about them. For example, the Gattaca complex feels a little stiff and unnatural and modern. It’s dull and grey and seems a little lifeless. Eugene and Vincent’s apartment looks a little too confined and restricted from the world. besides that, it looks modern with it’s glossy features and high ceilings. The beach is the one the contrast well against the Gattaca complex and Eugene and Vincent’s apartment. this setting was the most natural and the most untampered, technology free zone. It was the only place where nothing was taken over by technology and the crazy modern times of the world.

1. Describe how lighting and colour enhance Niccol’s message of the film.

Lighhting and colour enhances Niccol’s message of the film by presenting different moods and different emotions for different scenes. The lighting influences the way we see things on screen. For example, when we are given a flashback to Vincent’s past, we have more yellowy, sort of natural light going on, giving it a more happy or better feeling to go with it. In contrast to this, in present scenes like when Jerome is working at Gattaca, the colour of the scenes are more dark and edg, giving it a more threatening scene with a little tension.

1. Why is editing important in connecting the characters and the message of the film? Describe

Editing is important in connecting the characters and the message of the film because it gives the film a deeper level of meaning and it gives us a story behind all the characters and the issues of plot. Like, for example, when a dramatic cutting, which is a scene that is quickly taken over by another, is put in between scenes, it gives the film a more dramatic and suspenseful tension.

1. How editing is used on the final scene of Gattaca?

In the final scene of Gattaca, editing is used to show the growing bond/relationship between Vincent and Eugene. Scene doubling is the technique used to show this final scene between Vincent finally achieving his dreams and Eugene going on to meet his end, by committing suicide.

1. How does Niccol manipulate sound? Refer to key scenes in your answer.

Niccol manipulates sound by associating them with things that don’t normally go together. For example, at the beginning of the film, we see bits of nails, hair follicles and flakes of skin falling, and as they hit the ground they are accompanied by a sound which would usually be used when something heavy drops. This makes us kind of falter in how we see these tiny things, because of the way the music/sound effect accompanies them.

1. How are different camera angles used in establishing relationships between viewer and subject and also power relations in the film?

The different camera angles used in establishing relationships between viewer and subject and also power relations in the film by allowing different angles to show a character in a particular way. These angles expose a character’s inner thoughts and feelings. For example a close up on Irene’s face is used to portray her bitterness and jealousy, when she misses out on or denied an opportunity. Vertical angles are used to explore a person’s authority or power. For example when Vincent is seated at his cubicle, he must look up at the director, symbolising his inferiority and vulnerability.

1. What does the costumes of the characters symbolise? Give examples for both the valids and invalids.

The costumes of the character symbolises their “genetic social status” in the world of Gattaca. For example, Valids with their dull coloured suits and uniform symbolises their lack of individuality and that they have an authority to work at Gattaca. Invalids on the other hand are poorly dressed lack the cleanly shaven and dressed up look. The invalids are usually in a janitor uniform to symbolise their lower social status in the world of Gattaca.

1. What is a motif and what is the meaning of the recurring motifs in Gattaca?

A motif is an object that keeps recurring, that symbolises something. The recurring motifs in Gattaca are water, space shuttles, hair and bars. Water or the ocean symbolises the magnitude of Vincent’s struggle and it also symbolises purification. Space shuttles symbolises Vincent’s lifelong dream to go into space. Hair represents how DNA has come to take over the world. It symbolises the how DNA has come to define a person’s social class which limits them from certain things. Bars symbolise the prison that he has been trapped in ever since he was a small child. It represents what he is denied in this new futuristic world of Gattaca.